for inclusion of seven subject fields (trades) namely Electronic Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Auto Engineering Technician, Repairs, Maintenance and rewinding of Electric Motor, Horticulture, Cookery, and Bakery & Confectionery under the Apprentices Act, 1961. The proposal was examined by a team of Technical Officers of the Ministry of Labour and found that courses are already covered under the Apprentices Act, 1961 by similar or other names for the category of Trade Apprentices. In view of the policy of the Government that duplication of trades/subject fields under the categories of Trade Apprentices and Technician (Vocational) Apprentices should be avoided, the above proposal of Govt. of Maharashtra could not be accepted.

A fresh proposal was received from Govt. of Maharashtra in August, 1997 for inclusion of the seven subject fields under the Apprentices Act, 1961. In the meantime, one of the seven subject fields namely "Horticulture" has been included under the Apprentices Act, 1961.

A decision was taken to constitute Subject Matter Expert Committee to examine the feasibility of inclusion of the remaining six subject fields in the category of Technician (Vocational) Apprentices under the Apprenticeship Training Scheme. Accordingly four Subject Matter Expert Committees have been constituted. Meetings of two Committees have been held and meetings of other Committees are scheduled to be held shortly.

The recommendations of the Expert Committees will be placed before the Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC), a statutory tri-partite body for their consideration and action will be implemented according to the recommendation of CAC.

Right to Job A Fundamental Right

2094. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to make right to job a Fundamental Right;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (c)The Central Government are not considering to make 'Right to Job' as a Fundamental Right in the Constitution, mainly on account of resource constraints.

Implementation of Minimum Wages by States

2095. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of States would not effect minimum wages because of neutralisation of cost of living sought by employees;

(b) if so, the number of such cases;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a number of Central Trade Unions have proposed to bring the matter of minimum wage under the statutes debarring right of employers to go to court; and

(d) if so, what steps are being contemplated by Government?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 applicable to workers in the unorganised sector, empowers both Central and State Governments to fix/revise the minimum rates of wages for the scheduled employments under their respective jurisdiction. 18 States have linked the wages also with Consumer Price Index Number, for some scheduled employments which is called Variable Dearness Allowance.

(c) and (d) The question of including the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution was examined in consultation with the Ministry of Law and it was felt that the Act might

not be included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution because the validity of the Act has been upheld by Hon'ble Supreme Court from time to time. The employers have generally contested the Notifications issued under the Minimum Wages Act. However, recently the State Government of West Bengal have again made the suggestions for bringing the Minimum Wages Act under the 9th Schedule of the Constitution. The matter is again being examined in the Ministry.

Minimum wages for Agricultural Workers

2096. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2400 given in the Rajya Sabha on 21st December, 1998 and state:

(a) the reasons for mentioning the 1982 old figure with regard to the minimum wages for unskilled agricultural workers as far as West Bengal is concerned and also mentionining child labour;

(b) whether the State Government of West Bengal has failed to supply the latest figure and there still exists child labour; and

(c) if not, the latest figure of minimum wages of agricultural workers in West Bengal and other States—highest to lowest serially?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (c) The minimum rates of wages for agricultural workers were notified by the State Government of West Bengal in the year 1982, which provided for basic wages, rate of neutralisation for calculation of minimum wages and how minimum wage rates are to be revised with the change of consumer price index. With the rise in consumer price index, the variable dearness allowance was subsequently revised resulting in and increase in minimum rates of wages to Rs. 45.22 for adult and Rs. 34.06 for child (as given in the reply to Unstarred Question NO. 2400 on 21st Dec., 1998). As per the latest available information the minimum wages have been again revised on 8th October, 1998 and the present rates are Rs. 48.14 for adult and Rs. 36.07 for child with two principal meals. The child labour is not prohibited in agriculture and the notification issued by the State Government of West Bengal prescribes different rates of minimum wages for adult and child. A Statement giving latest available figures of minimum wages for agricultural workers, in different States/Union Terrirories is enclosed below.

Statement

Daily rates of minimum wages for agricultural workers fixed by different States/UTs under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948

(As on 1.10.98)

Sl. No.	State/ UTs	Minimum wages for unskilled agricultural workers
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Rs. 30.00 to Rs. 36.50 p.d. (According to Zones)
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Rs. 35.60 to 37.60 p.d. (According to Areas)
3.	Assam	Rs. 1134.00 p.m.* without food, shelter and clothing Rs. 984.00 p.m. plus food, shelter and clothing.
4.	Bihar	Rs. 51.00 p.d.*
5.	Goa	Rs. 46.00 p.d.
6.	Gujarat	Rs. 34.00 p.d.
7.	Haryana	Rs. 63.51 p.d.* with meals or Rs. 67.51 p.d. without meals
8.	Himachal Pradesh	Rs. 26.00 p.d. Rs. 45.75 p.d.
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Rs. 30.00 p.d.